

USE OF PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION FOR FOSTER YOUTH

Recent news articles have highlighted the ongoing issue of possible overreliance on psychotropic medication for youth in the foster care system. This is an issue of growing concern.

Los Angeles County falls slightly below the statewide average of one in four youth prescribed psychotropic medications, with an average of one in five – however it is an alarming statistic in comparison with non-dependent adolescents.

It is important for the County and this Board to understand the full scope of the distribution and use of these medications on our foster children, especially in relation to the mental health therapy and services that these youth should be receiving.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors, direct:

1. The Department of Mental Health, in collaboration with the Department of Children and Family Services, report back in 30 days on the use psychotropic medication for the youth within the Los Angeles County foster care system (including statistics on distribution over the past five years and current efforts to minimize the prescription of medication through skilled diagnosis and therapeutic treatments); and
2. The Department of Children and Family Services report back in 30 days on the role of Dependency Court and its judges in approving the use of such medications for children in their care.

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MDA:mvb

MOTION

MOLINA _____

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